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ADVOCATE OF PEACE.

MAY, 1844.

A UNIVERSAL PEACE SOCIETY.

TO JOHN LEE, LL. D., F. R. S., &c., *President of the London Peace Society.*

DEAR SIR,—I wished to bring the subject of this letter before the late General Peace Convention in your city; but, as there was not time then for a full and satisfactory discussion of it, I concluded to reserve it for a more favorable opportunity. I carried across the waters a strong conviction of its importance; subsequent reflection has served only to deepen that conviction; and, as much time may be requisite to mature and harmonize the views of our friends through the world on such a subject, I beg leave thus early to urge it upon their serious consideration.

I doubt not, Sir, your kindness will excuse the liberty I take with your name for this purpose. Standing at the head of the noblest Peace Society in the world, and prominent among men of letters and science even in the home of Milton, Locke and Newton, I know not to whom else I could address myself with so much propriety, or so much pleasure. Nor would I conceal the satisfaction I feel in thus recalling the warm and generous hospitality that welcomed the messengers of peace from this country to the still cherished land of our fathers and brethren.

I have long felt the need of a Peace Society for the world; an organization which should embrace the friends of this cause in every civilized country, and concentrate their scattered energies to avert the danger of war at any given point, and ere-long to turn the leading influences of Christendom into the channel of peace. We need a Central Committee of Vigilance for the peace of all nations; a committee with branches, correspondents and co-workers in every part of the civilized world; a committee on the alert to descry far ahead the gathering storm, and able by the prompt co-operation of friends in all the great marts of public opinion, to prevent its bursting upon mankind in the horrors of actual war.

I am not zealous for any particular form of organization; but I would not consent to one that should supersede or cripple any of the national societies now in operation. These must of course furnish the materials, and might perhaps unite to constitute the proposed society, appoint its officers, and prescribe its sphere and mode of action.

I cannot help thinking, that such a society would subserve a variety of important purposes. It would be a bond of union to the friends of peace through the world. Their common organ and representative, its voice would have far more influence than that of a local organization, and might well claim the respectful attention of any civilized government on earth. It would have a right to speak in cases where no merely national society could presume to interfere. We could not touch a difficulty between Great Britain and Austria, nor could you a dispute between the United States and Mexico; but a universal society, with the whole civilized world for its sphere, could with equal propriety enter its protest against a war threatened in any part of either hemisphere. A multitude of services it might perform

for the cause, which no other society would ever attempt. In many countries nominally Christian, there is at present no peace organization; and to those it might extend its efforts, circulate intelligence, and establish either societies, agencies, or committees of correspondence.

I grant that nothing of the kind has ever been attempted in any kindred enterprise. The reason is found in the nature of the case. Anti-slavery is a local concern, and temperance a personal affair; but peace is an object common to the great brotherhood of nations, and requires the union of them all for the accomplishment of its purpose.

London would of course be the centre of such a movement. Your own Society has ever cherished its spirit, and done more than any other to deserve the name of a Universal Peace Society. Its agencies on the Continent, and its publications translated into so many languages, and sent into the four quarters of the globe, have already pioneered the way for such an organization as I propose; and perhaps it might, with a few modifications, become the official, accredited organ of the friends of peace through the world.

Another motive, very strong with me, and the chief reason of this letter, I find in the necessity or urgent expediency of having some *common, universal basis of co-operation in our cause*. Such a basis, I believe, has never been attempted; but the exigencies of the case loudly demand it. We must let men know precisely for what purpose, and on what terms, we ask their co-operation, before we can expect any considerable number to rally under our banners.

The cause of peace, more than almost any other, requires a wide circle of co-workers. Its field is the world; it aims at the entire, perpetual abolition of war; and for such a purpose, it must reach and move the great mass of minds first in Christendom, and finally over the whole earth. It must so far change their views as to make them discard the savage arbitrament of the sword, and adopt pacific measures alone for the adjustment of all national difficulties.

Here is the result we seek; but how can we secure it? Only by the co-operation either of the masses, or the leading minds through the world. But how can we enlist such co-operation? Mainly by constructing a platform so broad, that all friends of peace, high and low, extreme and moderate, can stand upon it, and consistently work together for the accomplishment of their common object.

There is among the friends of peace a well-known diversity of views. Some of them, assuming *the unlawfulness of all physical force* upon rational beings, and denying the right of man to punish, coerce or even rule his fellow, boldly avow, as their starting point, a principle which confessedly subverts or supersedes human government, and insist on the adoption of this doctrine as *their* basis of co-operation for the abolition of a custom which they regard as only one of the many evils to be cured by their panacea. A second class of peace-men, reasoning from *the strict inviolability of human life*, oppose war mainly as a wholesale violation of this comprehensive principle, and see not how the cause of peace can ever become perfectly successful without it. Other friends of peace, however, discard this principle, yet deem all war, both offensive and defensive, contrary to the gospel, and insist in turn on *their* theory as essential to the success of our cause. Still another class, incomparably more numerous than all the foregoing, and embracing the great body of intelligent and devoted Christians, hold the *custom* of war in abhorrence, and sincerely desire its abolition, but cannot think it wrong, in every supposable case, for nations to draw the sword in strict self-defence.

Here are four classes of peace-men; and we need the co-operation of them all, as absolutely indispensable to our object; but can they be made to co-operate? If so, how? I can see only two ways; we must either bring

them all to one standard, or allow them to co-operate without insisting on a change of their present views. There is no third way; but is either of these possible?

Let us look at these methods a little more in detail. Shall we demand perfect uniformity of views? Shall we, like old Procrustes, set up a cast-iron standard of peace, and then proceed to stretch, and squeeze, and amputate our friends, until we reduce or enlarge them all to the same dimensions? Suppose such an attempt made. I have already specified four standards of peace; which of these shall be the model and mould for all our friends? Each class of peace-men, if sincere, must of course insist on *their* views as the proper standard, and thus put an end to all hope of determining what one to adopt. No sane mind can dream of success in such an attempt; and, if perfect uniformity is to be required for co-operation, I see no prospect of ever uniting all our friends in this cause of God and a bleeding race.

Shall we, then, invite them to co-operate without changing their present views? *Will* they do so? *Can* they, without violating their principles? Is there any bond of union between them all, any principle common to both extremes, any middle ground on which they can all consistently meet, and co-operate, each in his own way, for the attainment of their common object? Here are the difficulties; nor do I deem it impossible to remove them, and thus open a way for the consistent, harmonious and effective co-operation of all that sincerely desire the abolition of war.

Let us learn wisdom from enterprises of a kindred nature. The friends of humanity, when united for the suppression of the slave-trade, labored for that as their only object; and all the doctrines they taught, as well as their efforts of every kind, were so many *means* to that *end*. Their aim was not to propagate a sentiment, but to produce a result; and, in reaching that result, they wielded as instruments a great variety of principles.

So in anti-slavery. Its friends associated, not to inculcate one principle, or any number of principles, as their *object*; but to accomplish the abolition of slavery by *means* of the sentiments they enforced, of the facts they stated, and the appeals they made. All these were alike means to their great end, their sole aim,—the extinction of slavery. True, they urged a variety of principles; but they used them all mainly as handmaids to their ultimate purpose. They dwelt chiefly on the sinfulness of slavery, and labored to prove it wrong in all cases for one man to *chattelize* another by claiming him as property; but this point was urged with more frequency and force than others, solely because it was found to be the most effective lever in upturning the whole system.

So in the cause of temperance. Its supporters aim only at a result, and wield, for the accomplishment of that result, a vast variety of principles or arguments. I know we hear much about the *doctrine* of temperance; but what does it mean? Solely abstinence from the use, sale and manufacture of intoxicating drinks; not strictly a doctrine, but a deed; not theory, but practice, or rather theory carried into practice. It is not the object of temperance to teach a principle or doctrine, but to produce a specified result, the entire disuse of whatever can intoxicate men; and all its doctrines and facts, all its arguments and appeals, are only so many *means* to this *end*.

Just so in the cause of peace. Our *sole* aim is *the abolition of war*. We seek not to establish a doctrine or principle, as our *object*, but to effect a given result; and all our teachings of every kind are only so many means of reaching that result. We use for this purpose a variety of means; but none of them constitute our object. We urge a multitude of principles; yet none of these, nor all of them together, can be said to be the end at which we aim. That end is a result,—something to be done,—the entire extinction of war from the world; and all our doctrines, and arguments, and facts, and appeals, and efforts of every kind, are only so many auxiliaries to that sole, ultimate purpose of our enterprise.

Let us now take one step further, and see on what terms the friends of

other causes have united. They have required, not perfect uniformity of views, but only cordial, active co-operation for the attainment of their common object. If a man would from *any* motives unite with them in putting an end to the slave-trade, slavery or intemperance, he was welcomed as a coadjutor, and left to take such views, and urge such arguments, as he himself felt most, and therefore thought likely to make the best impression upon others. Every cast of mind was to be met; and hence, the peasant and the prince, the moralist and the politician, the believer and the skeptic, the friend of man, and the calculator of pounds, shillings and pence, were not only permitted, but desired to press each his own favorite arguments upon men of kindred stamp.

Here is sound good sense; nor do I see why it may not, and should not be applied to the cause of peace, and all its professed friends be allowed to retain, if they choose, their present views, and still co-operate, if they will, for their common object. There are points of coincidence between them sufficient for this purpose. They are one in their desires for the abolition of war; they agree in most of their views touching peace, and differ only on one or two points; they would, in laboring for their common cause, use essentially the same means; and the diversity in their modes of exhibiting and enforcing the subject, is in fact necessary to reach with the best effect all the variety of minds that we wish to enlist.

Let me briefly illustrate this last thought. One man, deeply impressed with the superiority of moral over physical power, and conceiving Christianity to be a grand and glorious system of moral influences for the good of mankind, regards all use of brute force by one man towards another as unchristian, and chooses to oppose war from this simple, fundamental, far-reaching principle. It is indeed a broad sweep of generalization; but such a mode of reasoning suits his mind, and will doubtless be found to suit some others equally well. I do not, for one, like the principle; but, if I have no responsibility for it, and it proves more successful than any other in arraying certain minds against war, I cannot object to *their* using it for such a purpose. Any other cause would allow it; and I see not why ours should not.

Now, take the other extreme. Here is a Christian or philanthropist who has been trained to look upon *defensive* war as right; nor is he likely soon, if ever, to renounce that belief; yet he holds the *custom* itself in deep, unfeigned abhorrence, and ardently longs to see an end put to this crying sin, and curse, and shame of Christendom. To this conclusion he comes from general views, not inconsistent with the right of drawing the sword in self-defence. He knows the guilt and evils of war. He deplores its waste of property, and its havoc of human life; its sack of cities, its plunder of provinces, and its devastation of empires; its baleful influence on art, and science, and general improvement, on freedom, morality and religion, on all the great interests of mankind for two worlds; its pride and lust, its rapacity and revenge, its wholesale robberies and murders, its complication of vices the most loathsome, and of crimes the most appalling. Such aspects of war rouse his feelings against the custom, and make him both willing and anxious to labor for its abolition. Still he does not, with me, regard all war as unchristian; and shall I, for such a reason, thrust him from the ranks of peace, nor permit him to vent his feelings, almost as strong as my own, against the custom, in common efforts for its extinction? I must of course welcome him, if he will come up to my ground; but shall I not allow him to co-operate on his own? Shall I make *my* views a test for *him*, and insist that none shall labor for peace except in *my* way? If I may decline *his* co-operation because he does not agree with me, he may in turn refuse *mine* because I do not agree with him. So through the whole circle of peace-men differing in some of their views; and at this rate there can be no co-operation, except among those of a single class out of the four I have mentioned. And what would *any one* of them do for the abolition of war? Could they alone abolish it? Never.

Let us now glance at the two intermediate classes of peace-men. Both believe the gospel condemns all war, but reach this conclusion from different premises. One argues from the strict inviolability of human life ; a principle which sweeps away not only war, but capital punishment, and the right of government to take life even for its own support ; while the other reasons from principles of the gospel which do not necessarily forbid the taking of life in such cases. Now, which of these two classes shall set up their views, or modes of reasoning, as a standard for *all* the friends of peace ? I adopt one of these modes ; but, because I dislike his mode, shall I spurn from our common cause a brother who loves peace, and hates war as much as I do ? As an honest man, I must of course deem him wrong on every point where he differs from myself ; but, instead of letting him argue against war in his own way, shall I crowd his mind into my mould ? Is it wise for Saul to force his own armor upon David, or for the stripling shepherd to insist, because he had slain Goliath with his simple sling and stone, on arming all the hosts of Israel with that weapon alone ?

I come, then, to the conclusion, that the cause of peace ought every where to be prosecuted with the same liberality as other enterprises, and all its friends be permitted, without rebuke or suspicion, to promote it in such ways as they respectively prefer. The test should be, not the belief of this or that dogma, but *a willingness to co-operate for the entire abolition of war* ; and all that will do this, and just as far as they do it, should be regarded as friends of peace. I could wish this to be known through the world, as the platform of our cause. If any doctrine be required as a test, let it be the broad principle on which the late Peace Convention in London was constituted, *that war is inconsistent with Christianity, and the true interests of mankind*. I grant that this language is indefinite, allowing a pretty free play of the pendulum ; but this is just what we want, to meet the diversity of opinion among the friends of peace. I can, for myself, *make* it express my own belief of *all* war as unchristian ; but it *pledges* me only to a condemnation of the custom. To this principle there can be no objection from any one willing to labor for the abolition of war, because none *can* thus labor without viewing the custom in this light ; and hence the test of principle would in fact be the very test of action on which alone I would insist. We ask men to abolish war ; and, if they gird themselves in earnest for this work, we should, I think, let them do it in their own way, nor quarrel with them about their motives.

I think, Sir, your own anti-corn-law movement will illustrate and enforce what I propose. Its sole object is the abolition of the corn-laws ; and, if any man will co-operate for this end, he is welcomed as a coadjutor. No other test is required ; and it would be thought strange enough in the leaders of that enterprise to urge as a test the adoption of a principle equally applicable to a multitude of other subjects, and not believed even by a tithe of their associates. If you will only help them abolish the corn-laws, they care little on what principle, or from what motive, you do it. Meet them in their object, and they ask no more. So in peace ; if a man will, from any principle or motive, aid us in putting an end to war, he is our friend, our ally, and ought to be recognized as an accredited co-worker.

For such a course it were easy to find a multitude of arguments. I need not repeat, that it is the same with that adopted in all kindred enterprises ; but I may add, that it would relieve the cause of peace from much superfluous responsibility, and many irrelevant objections. It is in fact responsible only for the conclusion, that *war ought to be abolished* ; but our opponents, the advocates or apologists for war, instead of meeting us on this point alone, assail us, for the most part, on questions either extraneous or unessential, and hold us accountable for every wild theory, weak argument, or crude conception, in which any of our friends may have indulged. It is a false and fruitless issue ; for the point in dispute is not, whether the Bible sanc-

tions civil government, or capital punishment, or the taking of life in any case, or the use of physical force by one person against another; but whether war ought for *any* reason to be abolished. To this conclusion alone is the cause of peace pledged; nor can it fairly be held accountable for objections urged against such modes of reasoning as assert the inviolability of human life, or conflict in any way with the legitimate internal operations of government.

Thus would responsibility be left in every case to rest where it properly belongs. I do not feel bound to answer objections drawn from the advocacy of defensive war on one hand, or from that species of non-resistance, on the other, which denounces all forms of human government as unhallowed and daring usurpations of God's prerogatives. I do not argue against war from either of these extremes; and only those who do, should be held responsible for them. The same I might say of other modes of reasoning; let those who use them, meet their appropriate objections. The cause of peace is not accountable for any of them, because none of them are essential to its grand and only aim. Whatever may be thought of any arguments used by its friends, few will deny that war ought to be abolished; and for this conclusion alone is the cause itself fairly responsible. Such is the course pursued in all kindred enterprises; nor do I see why it should not be in this.

The course I recommend, would also secure for our cause the greatest variety of argument and influence. There are all sorts of minds to be convinced; and it is well to provide, if possible, a corresponding variety of arguments. No single class of peace-men can meet the wants of all. A few, fond of elementary, comprehensive truths, would be pleased with the broad principle, that the gospel discards all physical force; but such logic will reach only a mere fraction of mankind, and be scouted by the rest as extreme radicalism. More will be influenced by the doctrine of the strict inviolability of human life; yet this principle will satisfy but a small portion of society. The class of peace-men who argue against all war from such precepts of the gospel as bid us love our enemies, return good for evil, and give the other cheek to the smiter, will make far more converts; but a number incomparably greater than all the rest, will be attracted to our cause by those who dwell chiefly on the general wickedness and countless evils of war; considerations which the million are already prepared to feel. These varieties of argument converge to the same result,—the abolition of war; and I think the cause of peace should be so managed as to secure the co-operation of them all.

Nor can I discover the justice of excluding *any* class of peace-men. If any, which of the four? Shall we frown from our ranks the high non-resistant who deems all human government sinful, because resting in the last resort on brute force? He deems himself the best, if not the only consistent peace-man, and certainly is by his principles committed in every possible way against war. Shall we, then, refuse the right hand of fellowship to those who believe it wrong for man, under any circumstances, to take the life of his fellow, and denounce war mainly as a violation of this principle? Few, if any, can be stancher friends of peace. Shall we next discard those who admit the lawfulness of taking life in some cases, but deem all war contrary to the gospel? Such was William Penn himself; and such, I suspect, are now the greater part of our most active and efficient friends. Shall we, in fine, exclude all that believe war strictly defensive to be right, yet condemn the custom itself, and are willing to labor for its abolition? Then must we strike from our list far the largest number of our co-workers, and commit the injustice of supposing them to have no heart for this enterprise of patriotism, philanthropy and religion. Many of these men are honest, active friends of our cause. Such was Noah Webster himself, long after he became the pioneer of peace in modern times. Such, too, was William Ladd, who labored as zealously before as after he embraced the doctrine of all war contrary to the gospel. Such are multitudes, whom we

cannot spurn from us without equal injustice to them, and injury to our cause. Like Worcester and Ladd at their outset, they may need a fuller baptism of the gospel, a deeper, clearer insight into its pacific principles; and the course I propose would be the likeliest way of bringing them ere-long to regard all war as unchristian; but, should they never reach that point, they may still render invaluable aid in the work of banishing war from the world. Their professions of regard for our cause are not mere pretences. They hate war, and love peace, and are ready to help us in any way consistent with their views of truth and duty. Such friends I would neither exclude nor undervalue; and never, in my judgment, should the cause of peace be so managed as to forbid their co-operation, or that of any man who is willing to give it his active support.

I might, also, plead general precedent. The friends of peace, whatever their theories, have in fact acted, for the most part, on the principle for which I contend. In America, they have, with hardly an exception, proceeded on the plan of inviting the co-operation of all, whatever their views respecting wars termed defensive, who were willing to use means for abolishing the custom itself. Nearly every thing we have done here, has been accomplished in this way; and our friends in England may be surprised to learn, that the very resolves they have so warmly commended, as indications of deep interest in this cause, were passed, in some cases, by ecclesiastical bodies which would have given scarce a solitary vote in condemnation of wars strictly defensive. Such have been, from the first, a vast majority of our co-workers; not our warmest, but our real friends; and, had we refused the co-operation of all such persons, we should never have even started in this enterprise, since its very originators were only moderate peace-men. Such were not a few members of the late Convention in your city. I know that several of the delegates from America were unbelievers in the doctrine of all war contrary to the gospel; and such, I have good reason to suppose, were most of the delegates from every other country, except Great Britain. I doubt whether a single one from Paris had embraced that doctrine; for the Society of Christian Morals, if I am rightly informed, takes no ground at all on that point. Shall we, then, discard the co-operation of all such men? Have they no right to a share in this work of religion and humanity? Were we wrong in welcoming to our late Convention the noble Marquis and his excellent associates from Paris? Shall we reproach your own Society for recognizing Worcester and Ladd as worthy coadjutors ten or fifteen years before they reached the conclusion of all war forbidden by the gospel? If not, we endorse the principle for which I contend.

I must in candor insist, that the strong friends of peace are not its *only* friends. Others love it as truly, if not as ardently, as we do; and I deem it wrong to deny them the credit of real, unfeigned interest in the cause. Such treatment is suicidal. If we may exclude them, they may in turn exclude us; and hence would result an utter abandonment of our enterprise.

We wish, moreover, to influence those who guide the helm of state. How shall we do this? Not one in a thousand of them deems *all* war unchristian, or regards those who do, in any better light than that of weak-minded, well-meaning enthusiasts. Upon such men it would be quite useless to urge the *strong* doctrines of peace; and, if we reach them at all, it must be through its moderate friends and moderate arguments. Were we to rally in one phalanx the four classes of peace-men, we might perhaps make a favorable, effective impression on rulers themselves; but such a rally can never be made without admitting the co-operation of all that will labor in any way for the abolition of war.

Such a course would obviate many causes of jealousy and collision among the friends of peace. All their strength ought to be spent against their common foe, the great blood-leech of the world for fifty centuries; but no small part of their time and energies has hitherto been wasted in disputes

among themselves on points not essential to their grand and only object. A sad mistake this, and high time it were corrected; but the only way to do so, is to put in practice the principle for which I contend, of allowing all that will to co-operate for the abolition of war, and of holding the cause of peace responsible for that result alone.

Nor can I well imagine any valid objection to a course so liberal. Shall I be told that 'it erects no standard, fixes no principle?' It provides all the standard, all the principle necessary for our purpose. Such a course goes against war, against the whole war-system; and what else do the friends of peace, as such, aim to abolish? It goes for the entire abolition of war, for universal and permanent peace; and can the strongest friend of our cause ask for more?

'But such a course would not introduce the *right* standard.'—Who shall say what is the right standard? Which class of peace-men shall determine this point? Whichever should, the other three might complain; but the course I suggest, would leave them all to urge their respective views with entire freedom. Thus every aspect of the subject would be exhibited, and all its arguments and illustrations exhausted. True, no single class would secure for *their* faith the exclusive endorsement of all peace-men; but every man's views would have a fair chance, and go for what different minds should think them worth.

'Such a course, however, would be no reform, because not in advance of present opinion and practice.'—An entire mistake; for it would set every man at work in his own way, and leave the strongest friends of peace to push the cause forward as fast as possible. True, it would not go beyond or above the present views of its friends; and no cause can, since no man can honestly teach what he does not believe.

'But we should thus be obliged to contradict or conceal our principles.'—By no means; for we allow you to utter yours without restraint, and merely ask you not to make others responsible for what they do not themselves believe. I cannot consent to be gagged; and I would give to others the same liberty that I claim for myself. Different classes of peace-men are united in this cause; and we simply insist, that no peace society, as such, shall endorse for one, to the exclusion or disparagement of the rest. All may equally plead conscience; and we would permit them all alike to argue against war, each in his own way, nor hold them accountable for any views except their own.

'Such a course would make a Babel of our cause.'—How? Almost every kindred enterprise has pursued a similar course, without confusion or embarrassment. Did not Wilberforce and his coadjutors labor in this way for the abolition of the slave-trade? Was not every one allowed without complaint to urge his own arguments? Did the leaders lay down a single principle as a criterion, and insist that none but believers in that principle should co-operate with them? So with the friends of temperance. They all go for abstinence from intoxicating drinks, but leave every man to do so from whatever arguments or motives he pleases.

'I like, however, to see a reform reduced to its simplest elementary principle.'—That may be a very pleasant and useful exercise for *you*; but is it a wise course for a reform which has to deal with all sorts of minds? You love to simplify and generalize; but most persons are averse to such efforts, and would be very likely to turn their backs on such modes of advocating any cause. Such a procedure would also multiply very much the difficulties of a reform. Let me suppose you arguing against the slave-trade. Not satisfied with proving it wrong, you try to bring it under the condemnation of some general principle, applicable to a hundred other things; the principle, if you please, that all love of money, or all physical coercion of men, both of which are so deeply concerned in that trade, is unchristian. Your antagonist readily admits the traffic to be wrong, but joins issue on

your general principle, and thus compels you to waste nearly all your strength upon what is not essential to your purpose. Were you endeavoring to abolish duelling, would you first establish the principle, that self-defence, or the taking of human life in any case, or all use of brute force, is unchristian, and then forbid the co-operation of any that did not embrace one or all of these principles? True, if you prove either, you condemn duelling; but if neither is true, that practice may still be utterly wrong. So in peace. I prove it just as wrong for nations to fight as it is for individuals; but one of your sticklers for simplification presses me to know on what *principle* I condemn war. 'Why, I have just adduced a dozen, in the shape of so many arguments against it.' 'But on what *one* in particular do you deem it wrong? What is your stand-point?' If in reply I say, that human life is inviolable, or that the gospel discards all physical force, or forbids my injuring another for my own benefit, he starts at once a new trail of objections, not against my sole aim of abolishing war, but against my principle as applicable in his view to something else which he thinks right. He says it condemns capital punishment; and he is a believer in the necessity and lawfulness of that. He deems it subversive of all human government; and that he regards as the worst kind of politico-religious Jacobinism. Thus he leads me away from my sole object into disputes which have little or no connection with peace. If you prove human life inviolable, or all use of brute force unchristian, you certainly condemn war; but is it wrong on no other grounds? If it is, then let all that choose, discard it on those grounds, nor insist that they shall argue against it only in your own favorite way.

'But every reform should have some fixed, distinguishing principle.'—So it should; and such would the method proposed insure to the cause of peace. It is the principle, that war, being inconsistent with Christianity, and the true interests of mankind, ought to be abolished. What principle in any reform is more distinct, more intelligible, or more practical than this? What more can we need or desire?

'But we should carry out our principles.'—So we should to the accomplishment of our object, but no farther. Nothing more is done, or attempted, or even permitted, in anti-slavery, or temperance, or any enterprise of the kind. No principle in any of them is pushed to its utmost application. Take an example or two. The broad principle, lying at the bottom of temperance, forbids excessive or injurious stimulation of our bodies; but this principle, if carried into all its possible applications, would sweep away tobacco, and tea, and coffee, and animal food, and a multitude of other indulgences, never embraced in the temperance reform. One principle, frequently urged in the anti-slavery cause, requires us to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us; but who ever censured abolitionists for not applying this principle to every possible case, and thus introducing extraneous questions that would soon set them all by the ears among themselves? The very reasoning which denounces compulsory labor, might suffice, thus carried out, to close every factory, workshop and mercantile establishment in Christendom. Some reformers are even now applying these principles to purposes that are entirely discarded by those who recently deemed themselves the most thorough radicals of the age. The cause of peace is not an exception, in this respect, to all others; nor can its friends be reasonably required to carry any principle beyond their single object of abolishing war. If it answers this purpose, it is all we want of it.

Here, then, is the sum of my suggestions. The friends of peace, associated merely for the abolition of international war, should be mutually pledged only to that end, and should be allowed to retain each his own views, and to labor for their common object in such ways as they respectively prefer, without insisting upon any other basis of co-operation than the belief, that war, being inconsistent with Christianity, and the true interests of mankind, ought to be abolished. Such a course would, I think, remove not a few obstructions, conciliate a much larger number of co-workers in the cause,

and pave the way for its more rapid progress, and for a triumph more speedy and glorious.

The time has come, I think, for a much more extensive rally in behalf of this cause than has ever yet been made or attempted. It is the grand interest of the world; and its claims we should urge upon every friend whether of God or man. Almost every movement for the good of mankind is beginning to put in practice more or less of our principles; and scarce an enterprise of benevolence or reform, that might not be laid under contribution to our cause. Of all such influences we should avail ourselves to the utmost, and set the ark of peace afloat on this tide of universal improvement. We should spread our sails for every breeze that may waft us sooner into the port of universal and permanent peace. We should press into our service every possible auxiliary. We need and may secure all the good influences of the world. The age of brute force is fast giving place to the era of moral influence; and even legislators and warriors, the disciples of Draco, and the sons of Mars, are beginning to learn that there are better means than those of bloodshed for controlling rational beings. Such is the spirit of the age; and, with little if any use of bayonets or bullets, of halters or chains, it will yet contrive to restrain the wrong-doer, to protect the innocent, and right the injured. The reign of love is coming; and its triumphs over bad passions and customs will ere-long astonish the world. This spirit calls for peace; and, should we make our platform broad enough to include all that are really desirous, from any motives, of putting an end to the time-hallowed tyranny of the sword, we might ere-long rally for its utter abolition every well-wisher to mankind. Let us do our whole duty; and not another war shall ever sweep its besom of blood and fire over any portion of the civilized world.

† These suggestions, my dear Sir, I humbly submit, in the hope that they may serve in some measure to prepare the way in this cause for a more effective co-operation of all that love God, their country, or their species.

GEO. C. BECKWITH.

BOSTON, U. S. A., May, 1844.

P. S. I wish it to be understood, that I am alone responsible for the contents of this letter.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

WAR AND INTEMPERANCE.—A late report of the New British and Foreign Temperance Society, computes that in one hundred and one battalions, in a period of eighteen years, 143,218 soldiers, or one-tenth of the whole, have been tried for crimes committed under the influence of strong drink, and have received 11,925,575 lashes, and 3,453,796 days' imprisonment; and the deluded lovers of strong drink have forfeited in their pay for drunkenness, about \$500,000.

A MODERN WAR-SHIP.—“As an item of news,” says a letter-writer in 1842, “I might tell you of the steam-ship of war Union, Captain Hunter, now lying at the Washington navy yard. If accounts of her be true, she might be more appropriately called *The Unique*, for she is the only one of her kind. Her tonnage is near 1200; and she is propelled by a horizontal wheel submerged some fifteen feet below the surface. This wheel is protected by a sort of false bottom, so that it may be considered altogether within the boat. Her armament is, I think, eight sixty-eight pounders for solid or hollow shot, and her speed is to be twelve miles per hour. Her bow is exceedingly sharp, and is built pigeon-breasted, so as to cause an enemy's balls *aller-a-fleur*, at any but a large angle, and it is said that even in this case her powers of resistance are uncommonly great.

“The particular purpose she is intended to serve, is to meet broadside on, and cut an enemy's ship in two; and this favor, it is supposed, she can effect